

**MINUTES OF THE TOWN OF FRANKLIN TOWN COUNCIL  
REGULAR MEETING  
OCTOBER 7, 2024**

**THE FRANKLIN TOWN COUNCIL** held a regular meeting on Monday, October 7, 2024, at 6:00 p.m. in the Town Hall Board Room located at 95 East Main Street Franklin, NC.

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

**Mayor Jack Horton called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. with the following members present:** Vice Mayor Stacy Guffey, Council Members: David Culpepper, Mike Lewis, Robbie Tompa, and Rita Salain (joined via Zoom and could participate in discussion but not vote).

Absent: Councilman Joe Collins

**2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Vice Mayor Stacy Guffey.

**3. EXCUSE COUNCIL MEMBER FROM MEETING**

*Council Member David Culpepper made a motion, seconded by Council Member Robbie Tompa to excuse Councilman Joe Collins from the meeting. The motion carried unanimously. Vote: 4 – 0.*

**4. ADOPTION OF THE OCTOBER 7, 2024 TOWN COUNCIL AGENDA**

*Council Member Mike Lewis made a motion, seconded by Vice Mayor Stacy Guffey to adopt the Town Council Agenda for October 7, 2024 as presented. The motion carried unanimously. Vote: 4 – 0.*

**5. APPROVAL OF THE CONSENT AGENDA FOR OCTOBER 7, 2024**

- A.) Approval of the September 3, 2024 Regular Town Council Meeting Minutes
- B.) Budget Amendments
- C.) Tax Releases
- D.) Amendment to Budget Ordinance re: purchasing authorization

*Council Member Mike Lewis made a motion, seconded by Council Member Robbie Tompa to approve the consent agenda for October 7, 2024 as presented. The motion carried unanimously. Vote: 4 – 0.*

**6. RECOGNITION**

- A.) Rusty Cortopassi promotion to Pump Maintenance Mechanic - recognition by Bill Deal, Public Works Director

**7. PUBLIC SESSION**

No one signed up to speak

## 8. PRESENTATION

### A.) Presentation of the proposed inclusive play area on the Whitmire Property- Chris Yang, Carolina Parks and Play, LLC

Chris Yang, Carolina Parks and Play LLC, presented the proposed inclusive play area on the Whitmire Property. He went over the landscape structure, the nature/rustic theme and how it was designed for all people/children, so that all families can play equally. He gave a virtual tour of what the playground would look like.

Mayor Horton asked if there would be handicapped accessible restrooms close to the play area. Town Manager Owens said yes, the plan is to have a six-stall restroom facility built on-site.

Mr. Yang noted that in their warranty, if something were to happen to the equipment that the installation, follows the equipment warranty. Councilwoman Salain asked about the guarantee on the equipment. Mr. Yang said there was a material warranty, so it would depend on the type of material that would need to be replaced.

Town Manager Owens asked Town Council how they wanted to proceed. She noted that the Town was awarded a \$500,000 PARTF grant and that grant will need to be matched by the Town. Mayor Horton commented on partnering with others on the project. Vice Mayor Guffey said he would also like to see the Town partner with Macon County on this project.

Councilman Culpepper inquired about the total cost of the design. Mr. Yang said the total cost, with tax, is \$1,460,000.

Councilman Lewis asked about site prep and if the Town did some of the work would that defray any of the cost. Mr. Yang said that it could, but they would just need to look at the scope.

Town Manager Owens said they could do a design/build contract and not bid it out. Discussion was held on the timeline of installation. Mr. Yang said that if he were to order the equipment today it would ship in late December and they have dedicated install crews to get started right away. The install time is approximately two to two-half months.

Councilman Salain asked about the restroom's construction. Town Manager Owens said they would be constructed simultaneously due to the water/sewer infrastructure. The cost of the restrooms would be around \$200,000.

Councilman Culpepper asked about annual maintenance cost. Mr. Yang said he could get an amount from other Towns. Town Manager Owens said that Street Supervisor, Chris Waldroop has his playground certification.

Town Council directed Town Manager Owens to get with potential partners, work on getting a contract, and look at additional funding options.

## 9. PUBLIC HEARING

### A.) Public Hearing at 6:05 p.m. or as closely thereafter as possible to receive public input on rezoning request for property located at 842 Harrison Avenue PIN# 6585831569 from Residential R-1 to Neighborhood Mixed Use NMU - Justin Setser, Town Planner

John Brown requested a standard rezoning of his property located at 842 Harrison Avenue. The Planning Board voted to recommended the rezoning of the property from R-1 to NMU. Town Planner Setser mailed out letters to neighbors and he did not receive any calls.

**Mayor Jack Horton called the public hearing to order at 6:51 p.m.**

No one signed up to speak.

**Mayor Jack Horton closed the public hearing at 6:52 p.m.**

Councilman Culpepper and Vice Mayor Guffey thanked Mr. Brown for fixing up the property.

***Council Member David Culpepper made a motion, seconded by Council Member Mike Lewis to approve the rezoning request for property located at 842 Harrison Ave from Residential R-1 to Neighborhood Mixed Use NMU as presented. The motion carried unanimously. Vote: 4 – 0.***

#### **10. NEW BUSINESS**

- A.) Request approval of street closure - Main Street on Saturday, October 26, 2024 from 8:00 a.m. until 3:00 p.m.- Monster Mash- Amie Owens, Town Manager

***Council Member Robbie Tompa made a motion, seconded by Council Member Mike Lewis to approve the street closure request as presented. The motion carried unanimously. Vote: 4-0.***

#### **11. DEPARTMENTAL UPDATES**

- A.) Finance – Sarah Bishop, Finance Director gave an update on the 2023/2024 FY audit, AP is now being run weekly with the addition of the full-time accounting technician, and she introduced the new fleet management program.
- B.) Planning/IT – Justin Setser, Town Planner gave an update on the new email service from Google, code enforcement violations, upcoming Planning Board vacancy, downtown Wi-Fi usage during Hurricane Helene aftermath, charging stations in Town Hall parking lot.
- C.) Police – Devin Holland, Police Chief gave an update on the new e-bike donation, Hillside Street cleanup, Operation Trip Wire (child sex crime bust), storm donations, recent missing individual search, and street closures.

#### **12. ITEMS FROM COUNCIL**

- A.) Termination of the State of Emergency Declaration for Town of Franklin - Mayor Jack Horton  
Mayor Jack Horton lifted the Town of Franklin’s State of Emergency Declaration from Hurricane Helene.

Town Attorney John Henning, Jr. said there is a lot of preparedness that the Town could do to be ready if this happens again. There’s a lot of leg work that can be done that would help with FEMA grants. Mr. Henning will work with the Town on this.

Vice Mayor Guffey thanked all the organizations and volunteers that helped with the missing person search and the storm relief.

Councilman Culpepper inquired about the greenway connector. Town Manager Owens said it would be a different year for that project. Following state review and input, due to the wetlands, a boardwalk would need to be built. The cost for the initial connector was \$150,000 with the new requirement it would be around \$350,000.

Mayor Horton reminded Town Council of the Commit to Civility Zoom training on October 17<sup>th</sup>.

Councilman Tompa thanked the community for all the drop-off sites for hurricane relief. He said it's heartwarming to see everyone coming together for the greater good.

Councilwoman Salain said FROG Quarters is having their Frog Fair the Saturday after PumpkinFest (10/26). The Southwest Region A will have a meeting tomorrow (10/8) on housing crisis/rebuilding.

### **13. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- A.) Next Regular Town Council Meeting is Monday, November 4, 2024
- B.) Final Pickin' on the Square for the season- Saturday, October 12, 2024
- C.) 28th Annual Pumpkinfest - Saturday, October 19, 2024

### **14. ADJOURNMENT**

***Council Member David Culpepper made a motion, seconded by Council Member Mike Lewis to adjourn the meeting at 7:30 p.m. The motion carried unanimously. Vote: 4- 0.***

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C. Jack Horton, Mayor

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Nicole Bradley, Town Clerk